

Morning sickness used to be a mystery. Now researchers say they have figured out the root cause

For many birth givers, nausea and vomiting during pregnancy isn't just a minor annoyance, it [can be debilitating](#), and there's not much that can be done to alleviate the symptoms. That's why researchers from Cambridge University and the Keck School of Medicine at USC sought to understand the causes of morning sickness in hopes of one day preventing and better treating it.

"We've been interested in this hormone called GDF15 for several years now," says [Sam Lockhart](#) one of the authors of a new study about the hormone which they found impacts the severity of pregnancy nausea.

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Understanding GDF15's effect on the brain coupled with the fact that it's produced entirely by the fetus in the placenta allowed researchers to really put together what was happening when pregnant people experience [morning sickness](#).

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Lockhart and his team's findings help us understand [morning sickness](#) in a different way. The findings show that how intense a person's nausea and vomiting during pregnancy is largely dependent on the makeup of their DNA. But there are some other factors that impact the severity of sickness.

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